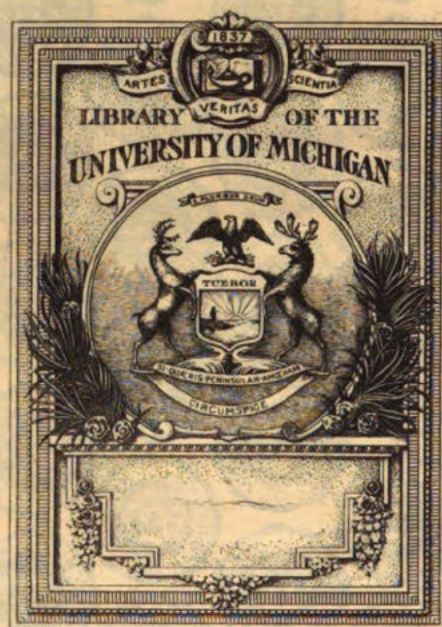


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# The American Magazine

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VOLUME CVI

July, 1928, through December, 1928

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Blair, Dr. W. Reid..... 18 Oct.  
Brubaker, Howard..... 18 July  
Burt, Katharine Newlin..... 40 Sept.

### C

Cadman, S. Parkes, D. D..... 40 Nov.  
Callen, Charles Lane..... 54 July  
Carman, Dorothy Walworth..... 24 Aug.  
Chadbourne, Archie..... 40 Aug.  
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Crowell, Chester..... 18 Nov.  
Crowell, Merle..... 41 Aug., 53 Oct., 45 Dec.

### D

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Delano, Edith Barnard..... 36 Nov.  
Derieux, James C..... 68 Aug.  
Derieux, Samuel A..... 54 Oct.  
Dingle, Captain..... 59 Aug.  
Durant, Will..... 31 July  
Dutton, William S..... 15 July, 34 Aug., 52 Sept., 16 Nov., 46 Dec.

### E

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### F

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Fullerton, Hugh..... 55 Sept., 62 Dec.

### G

Gray, George W..... 22 Sept., 46 Nov.  
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Grey, Zane..... 48 July, 51 Aug., 58 Sept., 46 Oct.  
Guest, Edgar A..... 30 July, 52 Oct., 7 Nov.  
Guiterman, Arthur..... 25 Aug., 27 Nov.  
Gwinn, Sherman..... 25 July, 25 Nov., 52 Dec.

### H

Harrington, Mildred..... 32 July, 66 July, 70 Aug., 62 Sept., 22 Oct.  
Hicks, Edwin P..... 56 Dec.  
Holland, R. P..... 65 Nov.  
Humphrey, Forest Talmage..... 69 Aug.

### J

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### K

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Kent, Richard..... 54 Aug.  
Kilbourne, Fannie..... 34 July, 31 Oct.  
Knox, Esther Melbourne..... 63 Nov.

### L

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### M

Marquis, Don..... 56 July, 44 Oct.  
May, Earl Chapin..... 44 July  
May, Stella Burke..... 62 Oct.  
McNamee, Graham..... 46 July, 20 Sept., 15 Nov.  
Montross, Lynn..... 14 Dec.  
Mullett, Mary B..... 22 Aug., 44 Nov., 43 Dec.

### P

Pelley, William Dudley..... 58 Nov., 36 Dec.  
Peters, Francis..... 65 July  
Phillips, H. I..... 52 July, 62 Aug., 54 Dec.  
Pierce, Graham..... 38 July  
Post, Emily..... 13 Dec.  
Post, Melville Davisson..... 16 Sept.  
Powell, E. Alexander..... 28 Nov.

### Q

Quillen, Robert..... 53 Sept.

### R

Reilly, Brig. Gen. Henry J..... 18 Dec.  
Reilly, Rosa Strider..... 65 Oct., 34 Nov., 62 Nov., 61 Dec.  
Robinson, Edith Day..... 66 Sept.  
Rutledge, Archibald..... 33 Aug., 58 Oct., 32 Sept., 40 Dec.

### S

Sadler, William S., M. D..... 26 Nov.  
Sass, Herbert Ravenel..... 54 Nov.  
Saunders, W. O..... 50 Oct.  
Steffens, Lincoln..... 48 Aug.  
Stefansson, Vilhjalmur..... 47 Sept.  
Stockbridge, Frank Parker..... 34 Oct.  
Sumner, Keene..... 26 Dec.  
Swett-Sommers, Naomi..... 64 Sept.

### T

Taylor, Frank J..... 42 Aug.  
Terhune, Albert Payson..... 15 Aug., 22 Nov., 35 Nov.

### V

Van Dine, S. S..... 14 Sept., 129 Sept., 7 Oct., 10 Nov., 28 Dec.

### W

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West, Rupert E..... 64 Nov.  
White, Wagner..... 60 Dec.  
White, Nelia Gardner..... 27 July  
Wiggam, Albert Edward..... 40 Oct.  
Willoughby, Barrett..... 36 Aug., 28 Oct., 7 Dec.  
Willson, Dixie..... 30 Nov.  
Winter, Ella..... 29 Sept.  
Wisehart, M. K..... 30 Aug., 26 Sept., 25 Oct., 22 Dec.  
Wright, Eugene..... 22 July  
Wright, E. M..... 66 Nov.

### Y

Yates, Brett..... 64 Oct.  
Young, Vash..... 30 Sept.





The  
**A**

September

25 Cents

American

Magazine

Melville  
Davisson  
Post

Archibald  
Rutledge

Graham  
McNamee

Clarence  
Budington  
Kelland

Bruce  
Barton



DRAWN BY JOSEPH SIMONT

The Importance Of  
Being Yourself



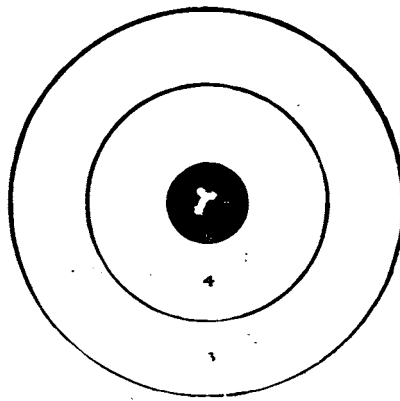
that have thus far guided my destiny that I shall not fall below the standard I have set for myself. This is why I have consistently refused to write more than one Philo Vance novel a year.

But, even were I convinced that I could go on writing detective novels indefinitely without falling below my standard, I nevertheless would desist. I have no yearning for much wealth. What I want most is an opportunity to go traveling in the realms of learning, and to write books of my adventures there. This opportunity is now mine; and when I bid farewell to "Vance" and "Markham" and "Heath" I shall return to my other more serious literary labors. The old lean years were good years—filled with ardor and high hopes and blazing ideals, and with the earnestness and the enthusiasm of youth. And I shall go back to them, and strive to recapture their magic. I shall again tread that long, weary path to personal fulfillment, which has no end but which leads ever upward to the stars; for only in an effort to achieve that which is beyond all human achievement does the restless spirit of man find solace. The bitterness of all disillusionments are the realities we have managed to grasp.

## S. S. Van Dine Sets Down Twenty Rules for Detective Stories

THE detective story is a kind of intellectual game. It is more—it is a sporting event. And for the writing of detective stories there are very definite laws—unwritten, perhaps, but none the less binding; and every respectable and self-respecting concocter of literary mysteries lives up to them. Herewith, then, is a sort of Credo, based partly on the practice of all the great writers of detective stories, and partly on the promptings of the honest author's inner conscience. To wit:

1. The reader must have equal opportunity with the detective for solving the mystery. All clues must be plainly stated and described.
2. No willful tricks or deceptions may be placed on the reader other than those played legitimately by the criminal on the detective himself.
3. There must be no love interest. The business in hand is to bring a criminal to the bar of justice, not to bring a lovelorn couple to the hymeneal altar.
4. The detective himself, or one of the official investigators, should never turn out to be the culprit. This is bald trickery, on a par with offering some one a bright penny for a five-dollar gold piece. It's false pretenses.
5. The culprit must be determined by logical deductions—not by accident or coincidence or unmotivated confession. To solve a criminal problem in this latter fashion is like sending the reader on a deliberate wild-goose chase, and then telling him, after he has failed, that you had the object of his search up your sleeve all the time. Such an author is no better than a practical joker.
6. The detective novel must have a detective in it; and a detective is not a detective unless he detects. His function is to gather clues that will eventually lead to the person who did the dirty work in the first chapter; and if the detective does not reach his conclusions through an analysis of those clues, he has no more solved his problem than the schoolboy who gets his answer out of the back of the arithmetic.
7. There simply must be a corpse in a detective novel, and the deader the corpse the better. No lesser crime than murder will suffice. Three hundred pages is far too much pother for a



# 1022 consecutive bull's-eyes!

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—ULRIC S. VANCE, JR., Hillsboro, Ohio

Member, U. S. Rifle Team, 1921

Member, Peter P. Carney's All-American Rifle Team

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(prepared instantly in the cup) . . . . . which you  
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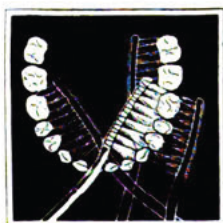
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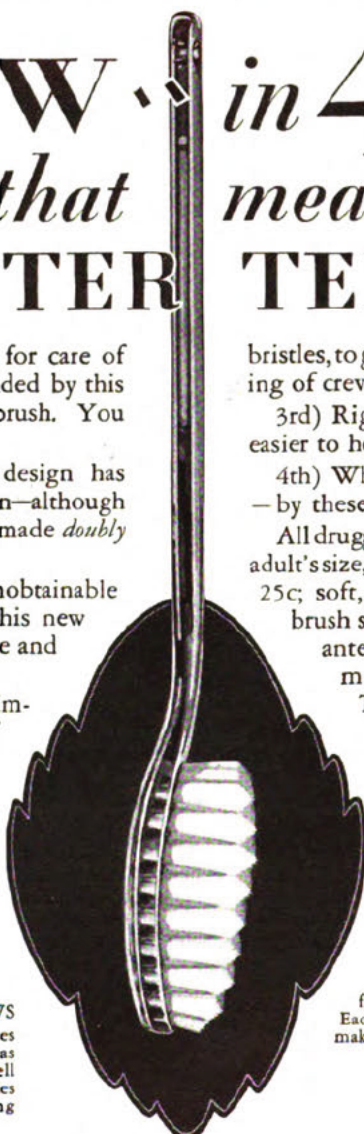
3rd) Rigid handles, unbreakable; easier to hold and use.

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All druggists have new DR. WEST's: adult's size, 50c; youth's, 35c; child's, 25c; soft, medium, or hard. Each brush sterilized, sealed and guaranteed. Today get one for each member of your family. Then see how quickly teeth whiten.



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crime other than murder. After all, the reader's trouble and expenditure of energy must be rewarded.

8. The problem of the crime must be solved by strictly naturalistic means. Such methods for learning the truth as slate-writing, ouija-boards, mind-reading, spiritualistic seances, crystal-gazing, and the like, are taboo. A reader has a chance when matching his wits with a rationalistic detective, but if he must compete with the world of spirits and go chasing about the fourth dimension of metaphysics, he is defeated *ab initio*.

9. There must be but one detective—that is, but one protagonist of deduction—one *deus ex machina*. To bring the minds of three or four, or sometimes a gang of detectives to bear on a problem, is not only to disperse the interest and break the direct thread of logic, but to take an unfair advantage of the reader. If there is more than one detective the reader doesn't know who his co-deductor is. It's like making the reader run a race with a relay team.

10. The culprit must turn out to be a person who has played a more or less prominent part in the story—that is, a person with whom the reader is familiar and in whom he takes an interest.

11. Servants must not be chosen by the author as the culprit. This is begging a noble question. It is a too easy solution. The culprit must be a decidedly worth-while person—one that wouldn't ordinarily come under suspicion.

12. There must be but one culprit, no matter how many murders are committed. The culprit may, of course, have a minor helper or co-plotter; but the entire onus must rest on one pair of shoulders: the entire indignation of the reader must be permitted to concentrate on a single black nature.

13. Secret societies, camorras, mafias, *et al.*, have no place in a detective story. A fascinating and truly beautiful murder is irremediably spoiled by any such wholesale culpability. To be sure, the murderer in a detective novel should be given a sporting chance; but it is going too far to grant him a secret society to fall back on. No high-class, self-respecting murderer would want such odds.

14. The method of murder, and the means of detecting it, must be rational and scientific. That is to say, pseudo-science and purely imaginative and speculative devices are not to be tolerated in the *roman policier*. Once an author soars into the realm of fantasy, in the Jules Verne manner, he is outside the bounds of detective fiction, cavorting in the uncharted reaches of adventure.

15. The truth of the problem must at all times be apparent—provided the reader is shrewd enough to see it. By this I mean that if the reader, after learning the explanation for the crime, should reread the book, he would see that the solution had, in a sense, been staring him in the face—that all the clues really pointed to the culprit—and that, if he had been as clever as the detective, he could have solved the mystery himself without going on to the final chapter. That the clever reader does often thus solve the problem goes without saying.

16. A detective novel should contain no long descriptive passages, no literary dallying with side-issues, no subtly worked-out character analyses, no "atmospheric" preoccupations. Such matters have no vital place in a record of crime and deduction. They hold up the action, and introduce issues irrelevant to the main purpose, which is to state a problem, analyze it, and bring it to a successful conclusion. To be sure, there must be a sufficient descriptiveness and character delineation to give the novel verisimilitude.

17. A professional criminal must never be shouldered with the guilt of a crime in a detective story. Crimes by house-breakers and bandits are the province of the police departments—not of authors and brilliant amateur detectives. A really fascinating crime is one committed by a pillar of a church, or a spinster noted for her charities.

18. A crime in a detective story must never turn out to be an accident or a suicide. To end



an odyssey of sleuthing with such an anti-climax is to hoodwink the trusting and kind-hearted reader.

19. The motives for all crimes in detective stories should be personal. International plottings and war politics belong in a different category of fiction—in secret-service tales, for instance. But a murder story must be kept *gemuetlich*, so to speak. It must reflect the reader's everyday experiences, and give him a certain outlet for his own repressed desires and emotions.

20. And (to give my Credo an even score of items) I herewith list a few of the devices which no self-respecting detective-story writer will now avail himself of. They have been employed too often, and are familiar to all true lovers of literary crime. To use them is a confession of the author's ineptitude and lack of originality. (a) Determining the identity of the culprit by comparing the butt of a cigarette left at the scene of the crime with the brand smoked by a suspect. (b) The bogus spiritualistic séance to frighten the culprit into giving himself away. (c) Forged finger-prints. (d) The dummy-figure alibi. (e) The dog that does not bark and thereby reveals the fact that the intruder is familiar. (f) The final pinning of the crime on a twin, or a relative who looks exactly like the suspected, but innocent, person. (g) The hypodermic syringe and the knockout drops. (h) The commission of the murder in a locked room after the police have actually broken in. (i) The word-association test for guilt. (j) The cipher, or code letter, which is eventually unraveled by the sleuth.

## You Look 'em Over—and You Obey Your Choice

(Continued from page 53)

Criminal Code, passed in 1909, makes these offenses punishable by a fine of not more than \$500 or imprisonment for not more than six months, or both.

Talking to the motorman of a trolley car, or to the operator of any public conveyance, is forbidden by law in most states. It also is a law infraction to ride on the front platform of a trolley car, or on the platform of a railroad coach—a law which is buried in the crush during "rush" hours.

Lotteries, raffles, and "games of chance" are against the law in Pennsylvania and in other states. Every sale of a "chance" on, say, a sewing machine, a ton of coal, an automobile, or what have you is law-breaking—with churches and volunteer fire companies leading the list of offenders.

And there is a bed-sheet law, in fact a number of them, as well as an ordinance regulating the use of the vacuum cleaner!

Certain Southern lawmakers, hearkening to the woes of elongated traveling salesmen, were moved to regulate the length of hotel bed sheets by law; and so were the lawmakers of Idaho, who also put themselves on record in favor of clean towels. The Idaho law provides that all hotel sheets "must be at least eight feet in length" and that "each guest shall be furnished with at least two clean towels." What is more, "in all hotels where fifty cents or more a day is charged for lodging, the sheets and pillow cases shall be changed after the departure of each guest."

Then, of course, there are the laws against the wearing of bed sheets as disguises for parade or other public occasions—aimed at the Ku Klux Klan.

1928 1929 1930 1931 1932 1933 1934 1935 1936 1937



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But wait a minute—

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